

Message Text

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SUBJECT: PRESS MATERIAL

1. HERewith FULL TEXT CARL ROWAN COLUMN OP-ED PAGE WASHINGTON STAR, AUGUST 11, HEADED "HENRY AND THE SHORTAGE OF BLACK DIPLOMATS."

2. SECRETARY OF STATE HENRY KISSINGER UNDOUBTEDLY IS STILL SNORTING WITH ANGER OVER THE LAUGHING BOOS AND GROANS OF DERISIVE DISBELIEF THAT HE PROVOKED AT THE ANNUAL CONVENTION OF THE NATIONAL URBAN LEAGUE.

3. HE PROBABLY HAS MUMBLED TO HIMSELF A FEW DOZEN TIMES, "WHAT DO I HAVE TO DO TO GET THESE BLACKS ON MY SIDE?"

4. KISSINGER WENT TO BOSTON TO DELIVER A LOFTY LECTURE ON THE NEW AFRICAN POLICY THAT HE RECENTLY ADOPTED AT WHAT SOME SAY WAS CONSIDERABLE RISK TO THE POLITICAL FORTUNES OF PRESIDENT FORD. THE SECRETARY, LONG GROWN ACCUSTOMED TO ADULATION, WAS SHOCKED TO FIND THAT THIS PREDOMINANTLY BLACK CONVENTION WAS MORE INTERESTED IN HAVING HIM EXPLAIN WHY

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THERE ARE SO FEW BLACKS IN JOBS OF CONSEQUENCE IN THE STATE

DEPARTMENT, AND WHY UNDER HIS REGIME BLACKS ARE GIVEN AMBASSADORSHIPS ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY IN AFRICA AND THE CARIBBEAN.

5. APPARENTLY STARTLED, KISSINGER LET HIS TEMPER OVERRIDE HIS SENSE OF DIPLOMACY AND HE LEFT THAT CONVENTION A VIL-LAIN IN THE EYES OF MOST DELEGATES. "IT SERVES NOBODY'S PURPOSE TO APPOINT BLACK PERSONNEL UNLESS THEY MEET ALL QUALIFICATIONS," KISSINGER SNAPPED.

6. THE SECRETARY (AND AT LEAST ONE OF HIS TOP AIDES WHO SPOKE TO ME) IS WONDERING WHY BLACKS TOOK UMBRAGE AT A REMARK THAT, READ IN INTELLECTUAL ISOLATION, SEEMS BEYOND REPROACH.

7. BUT KISSINGER SURELY KNOWS THAT WHAT HE SAID, IN EFFECT, WAS, "WE'VE APPOINTED ALL THE QUALIFIED BLACKS WE CAN FIND," WHICH IS NOT ONLY FAR FROM THE TRUTH BUT A SLUR UPON THE QUALIFICATIONS AND DIPLOMATIC POTENTIAL OF MANY THOUSANDS OF BLACK MEN AND WOMEN. THAT AUDIENCE PERCEIVED KISSINGER TO BE SAYING TO THEM, "YOU'RE ASKING ME TO LOWER THE LEVEL OF THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE BY HIRING INCOMPETENT BLACKS, AND I'M NOT GOING TO DO IT." THE SECRETARY SHOULD HAVE KNOWN THAT THAT LINE BECAME A RED FLAG OF ANGER IN 1961 WHEN THE LATE J. EDGAR HOOVER USED IT TO EXPLAIN WHY HE HAD ONLY 11 BLACK SPECIAL AGENTS OUT OF 5,873, AND SOME OF THE BLACKS HE WAS CLAIMING AS AGENTS WERE CHAUFFEURS.

8. NOW, IN FAIRNESS, THERE IS NO COMPARISON OF HOOVER'S SYSTEMATIC BLOCKING OF BLACKS SEEKING JOBS AS FBI AGENTS AND KISSINGER'S GENUINE EFFORTS TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF BLACKS HOLDING SOMETHING MORE THAN MESSENGER, CLERK AND JANITORIAL JOBS AT STATE.

9. BUT THE SECRETARY BLEW WHATEVER CREDIBILITY HE TOOK TO BOSTON WHEN HE SAID: "LET ME MAKE ONE THING CLEAR. WHEN WE ASSIGN AMBASSADORS, WE DON'T ASK WHETHER THEY'RE BLACK OR WHITE."

10. MAYBE, DEEP IN HIS HEART, KISSINGER WANTS TO BELIEVE HE HAS COLORBLIND PERSONNEL OFFICIALS. BUT THAT JUST UNCLASSIFIED

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ISN'T TRUE. ONE OF HIS AIDES ADMITTED TO ME THAT W. BEVERLY CARTER JR. HAD BEEN SLATED TO BECOME AMBASSADOR TO DENMARK BECAUSE KISSINGER AND HIS PERSONNEL AIDES WERE AWARE THAT BLACKS WERE VIRTUALLY RESTRICTED TO AFRICAN AND CARIBBEAN POSTS. BUT CARTER, THEN AMBASSADOR TO TANZANIA, RAN AFOUL OF KISSINGER'S TEMPER AND EGO AND ALMOST GOT RIDDEN OUT OF THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE. PRESSED BY THE CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS, THE PRESS AND A FEW WHITE

HOUSE OFFICIALS WHO KNEW AN ELECTION WAS COMING UP, KISSINGER BACKED OFF TALK OF OUSTING CARTER. BUT INSTEAD OF DENMARK, THIS BLACK DIPLOMAT WAS GIVEN LIBERIA.

11. SOME OFFICIALS AT STATE ARGUE, WITH VALIDITY, THAT THE BRIGHTEST BLACK COLLEGE GRADUATES AREN'T ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT JOINING THE STATE DEPARTMENT WHEN THEY CAN GET HIGHER PAYING JOBS IN PRIVATE INDUSTRY.

12. BUT THERE ARE SEVERAL OTHER WAYS -- "SPECIAL" FOREIGN SERVICE RESERVE APPOINTMENTS OF BLACKS IN THEIR 30S AND 40S, POLITICAL APPOINTMENTS OF AMBASSADORS OF BLACKS WHO HAVE BEEN SUCCESSES IN OTHER FIELDS -- TO GET A BETTER REPRESENTATION OF BLACKS IN OUR DIPLOMATIC MACHINERY. THE FACT IS, THOUGH, THAT ALMOST NO BLACKS CARE TO SHELL OUT A 100,000 TO 300,000 DOLLAR POLITICAL CONTRIBUTION TO "BUY" THE AMBASSADORSHIP TO LUXEMBOURG, JAMAICA OR ANY PLACE ELSE.

13. WHAT THE PUBLIC MUST UNDERSTAND AS IT PONDERES THE BOOING OF KISSINGER IS THAT IT IS IMPORTANT TO THE NATIONAL INTEREST THAT OUR DIPLOMATIC CORPS NOT BE PREDOMINANTLY A MALE, WASP CLUB. THE NUMBER OF BLACKS IN THE FOREIGN SERVICE CAN BE INCREASED SHARPLY WITHOUT THE SLIGHTEST SACRIFICE OF COMPETENCE OR QUALITY. END TEXT.
ROBINSON

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